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Green Admits 'Share of Mistakes'

By Dan Janison
STAFF WRITER

Questioned on his mayoral defeat for the first time, Mark Green cited Michael Bloomberg's record spending and the Sept. 11 catastrophe.

But the public advocate added, nearly six weeks after the razor-close contest, "I made my share of mistakes," though he declined to list them.

Green defended his campaign as racially inclusive and said it hit "the perfect storm" and "a series of circumstances that were very hard to navigate."

From the 15th-floor municipal office he will vacate Dec. 31, with a skyline view once framed by the Twin Towers, Green fought to sidestep specific flash points and regrets from the unusual campaign.

"As a successful businessman he [Bloomberg] thought that spending $69 million, including a saturation $30 million in the final 30 days, was a smart and necessary investment. I agree," Green said.

Green said Bloomberg has "done well so far," including making some appointments that he would have made, and said the mayor-elect won by persuading voters they needed a businessman in City Hall to rebuild after the terror attacks. He said he called Bloomberg in mid-November and they spoke briefly.

Prodded about the Rev. Joseph O'Hare's statement as Campaign Finance Board chairman that Green's actions — not a public-finance failure — led to the outcome, Green said, "I think it was probably a little inappropriate for a regulator to editorially comment."

Green wouldn't rule out future campaigns but said "right now the last thing I'm thinking about is running for office."

Contrary to one report, he said, "I'm not going to do political consulting or public relations." But he said he may offer advice and commentaries, run a civic organization and perhaps teach.

The Democratic nominee who led in polls in the final weeks generally defended his campaign.

Bronx County Democratic chairman Roberto Ramirez and the Rev. Al Sharpton stirred controversy over leaflets in white neighborhoods condemning runoff rival Fernando Ferrer's support from Sharpton. Both shunned Green's candidacy following Ferrer's loss.

"It's really sad that some misguided people — and I still don't know who they are — in the last couple of days handed out some racially divisive literature and posters," Green said. "Our campaign was not only not racially divisive but was racially inclusive."

Green said he has not spoken with Ferrer since the election but credited the Bronx borough president with enfranchising new Latino voters.

Betsy Gotbaum, the new public advocate, has contacted some of the office's 45 staffers, asking them to stay, he said.

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